



# LAKE WASHINGTON BLVD. TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS & VEGETATION MANAGEMENT CONCEPT PLAN PUBLIC MEETING # 1

Wednesday, June 7, 2006  
Mt. Baker Community Club Center

## MEETING SUMMARY

### **Staff Members Present:**

Lynn Sullivan, Project Manager; Ted Holden, Sr. Landscape Architect; Shwe-jen Hwang, Landscape Architect; Mark Mead, Sr. Urban Forester; Katie Moller, Urban Forester; Cheryl Fraser, Parks Resource Manager; Sandi Bell, SE District Crew Chief

### **Meeting Purpose**

The purpose of the meeting was to convey to the attendees:

- The scope of the proposed Levy improvements from Mt. Baker Swimming Beach to Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center.
- The location of five roadway drainage problems being investigated for repair from Mt. Baker Swimming Beach to Seward Park.
- The project schedule.
- A vegetation management plan as prepared by the students of the UW School of Landscape Architecture. The study addresses the length of the Boulevard from E. Madison St. to Seward Park.

The meeting was held from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Approximately 40 community members attended. The attendees commented on the presentations during two one-half hour comment periods.

### **Levy Improvements**

Pro Parks Levy funds will be used to make improvements to the existing dirt trail running alongside the lakeshore, replace trees that have died in recent decades, and repair drainage problems occurring on the roadway. The trail and landscaping improvements will be the first spending priority. Remaining funds will be used to address the drainage issues.

**Trail Improvements and Tree Replacement:** A Concept Plan was presented identifying improvements to an existing dirt trail along the lakefront, an extension of that trail in the vicinity of Mt. Baker Rowing and Sailing Center, and the location of tree replacements. The existing trail is proposed to be widened to approximately 2 to 3 feet and resurfaced using compacted crushed rock. Eroded areas will be reinforced with natural materials such as logs or rocks. Proposed replacement trees are shown at historic tree locations based on a 1983 survey. Potential tree species include big leaf maple, linden tree, oak tree, and green ash.

**Drainage:** Five (5) locations on Lake Washington Boulevard experience significant flooding during periods of heavy rain. Parks has hired a civil engineering firm to study these problem areas, determine a solution, and assess estimated costs for repair. Heavy rains are required to adequately assess the problem. As the necessary rain had not occurred in recent weeks, Parks could only identify to the attendees those areas that will be studied. They include:

1. The entrance to Mt. Baker Swimming Beach
2. Horton Loop frontage.
3. The curve between 50<sup>th</sup> and 51<sup>st</sup> Avenues S.
4. The two ADA ramps near Orcas Street
5. A catch basin in Seward Park just south of Orcas Street.

Detailed information concerning the solutions for these sites will be presented at the next community meeting.

### **Public Comment**

#### Comments concerning the Boulevard:

- Gravel parking spots along Lake Washington Blvd. are filled with a coarse gravel that is hazardous to bicyclists when it finds its way onto the asphalt. The gravel pull-outs also encroach upon -- and damage -- existing plants. Would like to see these spaces restored to green space and cars prevented from parking there.
- The fog line along the edge of asphalt paving has disappeared. The City neglects to street-sweep before the lines are painted so the paint is applied to dirt that quickly disperses. Fog lines are a critical safety feature for the bicyclists.

#### Comments concerning the proposed trail improvements:

- Leave waterfront for animals. Don't do any trail along waterfront.
- The proposed trail connection to Mt. Baker Rowing & Sailing Center from the intersection of Lake Washington Blvd. and 43<sup>rd</sup> Ave. S. is great! Lots of neighbors from the community use this connection. Thanks!
- Would the upper trail be used for biking and lower trail be used for pedestrians? Answer: Parks will not manage use of the trails.
- Is there proposed lighting? Answer: no.
- A person suggested that some people do not want to see improvements to the existing dirt trail since people may still like to run on soil and lawn instead of crushed rock. She felt the lower trail does not offer a different recreational experience and she would rather see a jogging path at Seward Park.
- Another person responded that he enjoys the lower trail because it's quieter than the upper trail and closer to the water.
- One person questioned if mountain bikers would be inclined to use the improved trail. An experienced mountain biker replied, "not likely" as the trail would not be as fun once it was smoothed and improved.
- The Friends of Olmsted questioned the wisdom of widening the trail.
- Another person commented via phone that she wanted the trail to be improved with crushed rock, "as narrowly as possible."

#### Comments concerning the replacement trees

- Concerns were expressed about the mature height the replacement trees would attain and their projected impacts to views.
- More madrone or dogwood trees were suggested.

- It was requested that no cottonwood trees be planted.
- Pruning concerns were expressed regarding the existing cherry trees.
- It was suggested that dead trees be converted to snags to provide wildlife habitat. It was also suggested that the dead trees be placed in the area of the lake known as the “near shore” to provide habitat.

Other Comments:

- Question concerning damages occurring to the park as a result of the SEAFAIR event and whether the SEAFAIR Organization pays for those damages. Answer: Yes it does.
- It was suggested that Parks should address shoreline erosion problems rather than cosmetic improvements such as trails and trees.
- Question concerning the use of SPIF money for shoreline restoration. Answer: This Levy project does not address shoreline improvements; there is no SPIF money in the budget.
- Question concerning traffic impacts during construction. Answer: At this early date, Parks intends to keep one lane of traffic open during construction.

**Vegetation  
Management Concept  
Plan:**

Contact Mark Mead 206.684.4113 or Katie Moller 206.233.5019 for information concerning the vegetation management plan.